

## Knowledge Awards audio overview transcript: Oral Health Strategy by Linnaeus Oral Health Working Group

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Hi, I'm Sean Cameron and I lead the oral health strategy for Linnaeus. Oral health has been a key focus for the company for a little while and the working group was set up to drive clinical improvements in managing dental disease. The uniqueness of this strategy is that it pulls people together from all over the company to contribute their thoughts and ideas and help create the plan for oral health.

This means that there is serious recognition and consideration of the potential impact of any part of the initiative.

The aims of the strategy were to increase the percent of dental nerve blocks performed with extractions, the percent of dental radiographs taken, and increase the number of dental procedures undertaken across the business. A standardized way of measuring nerve blocks and dental radiography was created through a clinical quality dashboard reporting system, which could give an overall company view as well as our individual practice level. These results were regularly reviewed throughout the year and actions taken accordingly.

This led to increases overall across the organisation in nerve blocks being performed in 60 % of extraction procedures in 2024, dental radiography in 53 % of dentals overall, and the number of dental procedures performed rising from around 15,500 in 2023 to nearly 18,000 in 2024.

Regular meetings were held throughout the year online along with two all-day sessions to formulate the strategy and to bring new ideas on how to improve oral health care across the business. Extensive educational resources were made available, including an online dentistry course and several in-person courses. Vet and nurse dental champions were also appointed, alongside regional dentistry support. Resources were made available to help sites switch to staging if they felt that it would be of benefit to their practice, patients and clients.

And interestingly, we also discovered that the sites that introduced staging had a significant increase in the percentage of nerve blocks and radiographs performed in their patients. The key to the success of this project has been the collaboration across the company with input from departments across the business. This led to the creation of some excellent resources and

also deeper thinking about how to increase the benefits of oral healthcare for patients and clients.

Clearly defining objectives regular meetings to check progress and agree key actions, and space for the creation of ideas from all involved led to the success of this QI initiative. There was also significant work at regional and local level to improve the level of dentistry performed, and regular conversations in practice helped to improve the quality metrics being measured.

For anyone looking to set up a project like this, I would strongly encourage setting out clearly defined objectives at the beginning and gathering individuals from across the organisation to help create ideas and strategies to improve clinical quality. The check-ins and regular meetings are also very important and performing some form of clinical audit at regular intervals helps to ensure that you're on track with your quality metrics. Thank you so much for listening about our project.

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